

The Giving Report 2021, published by CanadaHelps.org, indicated that "public benefit" was one of the fastest growth areas in online charitable donations across Canada. Read on to learn more!

What does "public benefit" mean?

This is when charities lend a helping hand to other charities in areas such as promoting philanthropy, volunteering, charitable activities, and community building. You may know a charity whose mission or work involves supporting other charities. You also may know one, but not realize it. In fact, we've got a few in our PECSF regional fund supported pools, such as HeroWork, Saanich Volunteer Services Society, Greater Victoria Volunteer Society and the Farmlands Trust (Greater Victoria) Society.

In this article, we'll be looking into the Farmlands Trust (Greater Victoria) Society (FLT Society) and exploring how charitable organizations support one another, as well as benefit from many different types of donations.

Though what we may think of as public benefit often involves large scale foundations assisting smaller scale charitable organizations, the FLT Society has uniquely positioned itself, providing public benefit in the form of food accessibility with its "field to plate" initiative at the historic Newman Farm in Saanichton, British Columbia.

The Farmlands Trust (Greater Victoria) Society

Since 2013, the FLT Society has led the "field to plate" initiative at Newman Farm, where the FLT Society team and volunteers grow, harvest, and donate fresh, local produce to those in need at [Our Place Society](#). The society has a 10-year license agreement (2015 – 2025) with the District of Central Saanich to serve as the agricultural stewards of a 1.3-hectare portion of the historic Newman Farm.

Did you know?

Our Place Society's meal and snack programs serve the Pandora Street dining facility location and 11 other supportive housing sites throughout Greater Victoria.



Photo credit: Natasha Caverley and Bert James (FLT Society)

Since its formation in 2008, the FLT Society has brought individuals and organizations together from across the Greater Victoria region to collaboratively relieve poverty and mitigate food insecurity:

- **Promoting philanthropy:** The FLT Society's [funders](#) (foundations, individuals and families, and public and private sector employers) provide financial and in-kind donations that facilitate opportunities for the FLT Society team to expand and diversify the range of produce grown at Newman Farm for the "field to plate" food re-distribution initiative each year. An example of in-kind donations is Bartlett Tree Experts assisting with tree maintenance on the farm, since 2015.
- **Volunteering:** Each farm season, local employers, families, and friends share their time and skills with the FLT Society by coordinating volunteer work parties at Newman Farm. Key volunteer activities include preparing seeds and starter plants, managing weeds, organic fertilizing of plants, tidying up the vegetable garden plots and raised garden beds to support optimal growth, boxing and packing produce for donation to Our Place Society, and winterizing the farm.
- **Promoting charitable activities:** From 2014 to 2022, the FLT Society's "field to plate" food re-distribution initiative at Newman Farm has grown, harvested and donated over 100,000 lbs. of produce to Our Place Society, worth approximately \$300,000.00.
- **Promoting community building:** With humility and respect, the FLT Society team appreciates its [partners](#) whose corporate social responsibility commitments and activities align with FLT Society's mission and values: producing food for those in need, protecting eco-sensitive and culturally special areas, preserving local farmland, supporting pollination activities, and promoting agricultural public awareness programs and community access. Community building creates synergies within and across sectors, society, and generations. As the FLT Society's motto aptly states, "farms today, food tomorrow."

Did you know?

The FLT Society has created a recognized model for sustainable farming and food re-distribution in the Greater Victoria region, utilizing [national award-winning certified pollinator-friendly farm practices](#). Specifically, the FLT Society's agricultural stewardship work at the historic Newman Farm is certified by the [Canadian Agricultural Partnership](#) for completing an environmental farm plan assessment, is a certified bee-friendly farm via [Pollinator Partnership](#) and is a certified wildlife-friendly habitat via the [Canadian Wildlife Federation](#).

Through the charitable agricultural stewardship activities at the historic Newman Farm, the FLT Society team, volunteers, funders, and partners recognize the importance of giving back by volunteering at the local and regional levels.



Photo credit: Natasha Caverley and Bert James (FLT Society)

Since 2014, a diverse assortment of produce is grown each year to align with customized menu options for Our Place Society, resulting from discussions and coordination between the FLT Society and Our Place Society's Food Services Department.

The FLT Society continues to be the largest single supplier of produce to Our Place Society - linking food production to poverty relief aid and food insecurity mitigation. With the rising cost of food, engaging in building a stronger regional food supply chain and food redistribution system has become increasingly important and urgent, particularly for individuals who are food insecure and/or living below the poverty line.

We hope this blog article provides you with an example of how people and organizations can truly come together for public benefit, making a difference now and in the future.

Remember!

Every story makes a difference!

This charity spotlight article was written in collaboration with the FLT Society to promote their organization and their work. If you'd like to share a story about an organization doing great work, please get in touch!

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